

## 2024 Ministry Plan and Budget As of December 7, 2023

In late September through mid-October; leaders, teams, and congregants were invited to share their ideas regarding priorities for the 2024 ministry activities related to Communications, Care, Faith Formation, Faith In Action, Technology, and Worship. Questions included, what is working well, what we might do differently, what should we stop, and what might we try.

The intent of this exercise was to gather ideas, to help set priorities and develop realistic plans. Not every idea will be implemented.

The following is a summary of the priorities and actions based on the integrated plan input. Detailed plans and proposals are included in the appendix for reference purposes.

Budget line items and notes have been added to some items for reference. Please refer to the detailed budget and budget notes for updated budget numbers and assumptions.

***Budget numbers and assumptions are drafts as of December 7, 2023 and will be superseded by the final budget as approved at the congregational meeting in January 2024.***

## A. Communications

We have made progress enhancing and improving our communications over the last year. However, there are several areas where we need to be more intentional, especially related to the inner workings of the Governing Board and Teams. Additionally, several teams commented on the need to recruit new and/or additional team members, including the Care team, hospitality, the deacons, and Community Kitchen.

Confusion remains regarding the role and responsibilities of the Governing Board, the pastor, coordinating specific activities such as coffee hour, and the priorities, values, vision and direction of the congregation.

Specific comments related to the Governing Board have been sent to the Moderator and Vice-Moderator to address.

Other related comments point to the need to hold conversations to explore ideas such as how to address existing challenges with the set up in the sanctuary and rethinking the walls and displays.

### 1. Conversation Topics

- a) Congregation Vision and Future
  - Vision
  - SNEUCC A.D.A.P.T. Module 1 and possible application
  - UCC Facing Your Church's Uncertain Future
  - Ministry Collaboration conversations with area congregations
  - Mission
- b) Worship
  - Worship Vision, Needs ,and Challenges
  - Online Worship: reconsider how we edit/post service videos
  - Worship Set up
  - Transition of legacy deacon responsibilities and clarification of responsibilities in new model
- c) All Volunteers, Leaders, and Teams Meeting
- d) Communications
  - Bulletin boards, walls and display
  - Review policies, clarify communications, walk through processes (expenses, calendar, etc.)
- e) FIA and Stewardship
  - 5 for 5 and special offerings
  - "12-month" stewardship
  - Greater community solicitation
- f) Facility users
  - policies, booking rooms
  - Contacts
  - Opportunities for collaboration/cross-promotion
  - Additional rentals to nonprofits
- g) Labyrinth Redesign

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### 2. Tools

- a) Create templates for all 2024 Share Newsletters and Annual Report
- b) Create webpages for all teams and events
- c) Make approved Policies available the an open Google Drive, web page, or short cuts – alternatively make full repository available to all leaders and teams
- d) Set up Mailing lists for groups and events like CoTH preorders (MailChimp? Google?)
- e) Mesh/synchronize online and offline signups regarding worship and hospitality (Lisa weekly)
- f) Create a photo repository for FCCW activities and events (can this be done through Workspace? Or Drop box)

### 3. Training

- a) MS Word and Office
- b) Mailchimp
- c) Basic design and communication principles

### 4. Budget Items

- a) Bulletin Board and related materials (start with three in 2024)
- b) Welcome package / visitor gift bag
- c) Training \$ for staff

## B. Care

Although we have a caring congregation, we continue to struggle with balancing the need for coordination of volunteers, the sharing of needs, and ensuring that people do not fall through the cracks. Additionally, we seek to find an individual to act as the overall care team coordinator, and/or to coordinate visits.

Note: the Senior Ministry and other activities related to addressing the loneliness epidemic are part of Faith In Action and not community care.

### 1. Conversations and Communication

- a) Periodically invite congregants to sign up for the care team volunteer, consider sending a message to everyone when a need arises
- b) Create a Care request card/online form to make it easier for people to ask for help

### 2. Training

- a) Identify training for those who want to be friendly visitors (from ) - \$30/per book
  - a. <https://www.prcli.org/online-resource/caring-ministry/>
  - b. [Pastoral care visiting lay training resource editable](#)
  - c. <https://a.co/d/dqhLMYs>
  - d. <https://a.co/d/5wJBWTV>

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- 3. Leadership**
  - a) Identify a point person or two for care and visiting
  
- 4. Budget similar to 2023**

## C. Faith Formation / Lifelong learning

The Children and Family ministry team met following Mitra's departure. We agreed that we not only need a reset for this ministry, we also need to rethink our approach. For this reason, we will adopt the following approach through 2024.

- a) We will hold off seeking to hire a coordinator through the first quarter of 2024. We will revisit this decision and determine whether to seek hiring someone at that point.
- b) We will acquire the UCC version of the Confirm Not Conform curriculum to support our youth. <https://www.confirmnotconform.com/> \$200 (will use 2023 monies).
- c) We will acquire curriculum to have available to send to our families (\$120/quarter), e.g., SALT and Holy Moments.
- d) We will organized Youth and/or family events at least once a quarter.
- e) We will seek collaboration in this area. (this effort will be part of the effort of the GB and ACM to gather congregations in the area for collaboration exploration in many areas).
- f) We will acquire and have materials available for youth and children each Sunday, updated the pray space based on the season, e.g., advent, lent, easter, etc.

In addition, we will continue to plan intergeneration activities including Brunch Church, Earth Day worship, service activities, the Pet Blessing, etc. to the extent that these relate to worship they will be planned and budgeted there.

Other Faith formation activities include offering adult and family studies beyond Tuesday morning, starting a prayer group, providing devotionals for Advent and Lent, and reinstalling the Labyrinth.

### 1. Curriculum

- a) Confirm Not Conform (purchased Nov 28, 2023)
- b) Holy Moments
- c) SALT
- d) Subscription for downloadable Youth and children's activities for Sunday
- e) Leader and Participant materials for at least one topical study, e.g., Nonviolent Communication, Covenant, or Emotionally Healthy Relationships and Spirituality
- f) Safe Church self-assessment

### 2. Events and Programs

- a) Monthly Prayer Meeting
- b) Adult topical conversation/study, e.g. nonviolent communication
- c) Quarterly Family / Youth Event
  - a. Community events- Blessing of Animals, Fall Festival, COTH- Santa's toy chest, Advent workshop, Tag Sale, Xmas gifts for TEEG, Carols Candles, and cocoa
  - b. Create Family friendly and weekend 'night out' events for folks to enjoy a shared experience that builds relationship and community; Hymn Sing, Coffeehouse, Musical Event, Chili cookoff, Games in the downstairs hall, Sound of Music Singalong /Dress up event, etc. Have a donation jar, or charge a nominal fee for folks to participate.

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- c. Host an intergenerational musical event. Invite area children and their parents to participate and arrange a practice time and space leading up to the event.
- d) Have a weeklong Summer 'Choirfest' from 9-2:00 PM for children age k, grades 1-2; 3-4; 5-8. Choir groups perform at the Sunday service and we all celebrate with a picnic after

### 3. **Coordination/Leadership**

- a) Part time coordinator (April – December) – will decide during 1<sup>st</sup> quarter what is needed

### 4. **Labyrinth reinstallation**

- a) Labyrinth Plan / Stencil added to budget \$900  
<https://www.labyrinthcompany.com/collections/glt>
- b) Materials (plants, rubber pavers) cost unclear. A team needs to gather around this if it is to come to fruition

## D. Faith In Action

Faith In Action will continue to function as we have in the past. The greatest shifts are to rethink the grant monies, coordinate with Stewardship regarding special offerings and (possibly) becoming 5 for 5, as well as creating more structure and process around the annual calendar of known activities.

The budget currently proposes that we use 2.75% of pledged income as the grant money allocation. Rationale: Shifting to a percentage of pledges makes the amount of giving more meaningful in that a) as pledges rise and fall so will the grant monies; and b) the 2.75% combined with our conference giving means that 10% of our pledge income is used to support other ministries, 10% is a form of a tithe. In addition, 2.75% is the imputed percent of giving based on the fixed dollar amounts designated for this program in 2023, i.e., if our pledge income is the same as 2024 there will be no change in the real dollars allocated to this program even though we switch to a % of pledges.

In the coming year we need to better understand the connection with FIA, needs, roles, responsibilities, and sustainability of related activities, such as

- Senior Ministry
  - Increase visibility
  - Create program/topic calendar
  - Solidify core team
- Scouts
  - more intentional connection on the part of our liaison.
  - explore practical needs, limits and practicality of remaining a sponsor
- Community Kitchen
  - Need new coordinators for 2025
- Family/Youth activities to address loneliness
  - Dedicate the Christmas Offering and the tag sale to address these needs

## E. Technology

The efforts in this area relate to making our facility more usable, operations more efficient, and communications more effective.

### 1. Process Conversations

- a) Create web pages for teams and activities/events so articles in newsletters can be briefer and point people to the pages.
- b) Reconsider how we edit/post service videos.
- c) Clarify chain of command/responsibility for who should make sure all the Sunday service audio is turned on and turned off again. Who is supposed to be responsible? The camera operator? A deacon? the musicians?

### 2. Hardware

- a) A “nice to have” but not essential addition replace the current (borrowed) wireless router with a mesh system such as one of the Orbi or Nighthawk systems. This would be in the \$500 - \$800 range depending on model. (508.09 \$800 angel project)

### 3. Software/subscriptions

- a) Replace Church Windows (\$1200 deferred until 2025)
- b) Google Voice instead of Spectrum Business.
- c) Add SSL to website (\$100)
- d) Migrate from Go Daddy to Blue Host or Google
- e) Consider/investigate migrating from WordPress to Google Sites?
- f) Consider paid version of Signup genius to reduce adds and make more user friendly

### 4. Resources

- a) Help with video editing
- b) Help maintaining website

## F. Worship

For the last three years, we have been working to create a more collaborative, team-based ministry. All who are interested and passionate about worship are able to share their gifts to help us facilitate spiritually grounded, meaningful worship of the God of Love that is accessible to people wherever they are on our journey.

Early in the New Year, in conjunction with our conversations about our Vision and our Future, we need to have a congregational conversation regarding the purpose, vision, and direction of Worship, e.g., to “facilitate meaningful, spiritually grounded worship that are accessible to people wherever they are on their journey.”

Everything else regarding worship priorities, investments, plans, etc. is dependent on this conversation, including roles and responsibilities of the pastor deacons, new team, exploring ways to

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use/alter the space in support of worship, incorporating visual arts, the use of digital media, online worship, varieties of music, investments in music, etc.

From a budgeting perspective, the budget will be similar to that of 2023 with three notable items for consideration/addition:

- 1) Money to upgrade the sound system and acquire our own equipment, rather than use borrowed equipment, i.e., \$1,000 essential, and \$700 desired enhancement (see the appendix for the details). (*budget line 503.02 \$1650 angel fund*)
- 2) Money to support the Music Director's vision (see appendix for proposal details) (*budget line 503.03 \$850, 503.05 \$500 music and tuning, 508.04 \$240; Retreat held in no cots location, e.g. Pastor's Garden \$500 savings*)
- 3) Money for an accompanist beginning April 1. (this is a nice to have, and can be deferred until later in the year, June 1 or August 16, however we need to be thinking about moving in this direction) (*503.07 Accompanist \$7875*)

Regarding the Planned Activities:

### 1. Conversations

- a) Worship vision and direction
- b) Worship accountabilities and responsibilities
- c) Summer Worship planning and process and summer worship planning team
- d) Online worship content

### 2. Events and Activities

- a) Worship retreat/workshop
- b) Hilke Hymn Sing
- c) "Service Sunday" go out and act on faith
- d) Faith stories based on theme or series

## G. Other

Several ideas were raised that do not fit in the six defined ministry and administration area. They are summarized below to ensure the ideas have not been lost.

### 1. Facilities Space and utilization

- a) Rethink the Library and its contents

### 2. Programing

- b) Shorter video clips/pod casts of morning message
- c) Sponsor events like WalkTober
- d) Open church for educational presentations on historical events involving church, tell story of John Elliot
- e) Work with Nipmuc people in some meaningful way



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### 3. Vision and Values Team/Long Term Strategy

The Vision team is currently planning to begin the Vision phase of the four-phase approach to clarifying our future. Coincidentally, these conversations dove-tail nicely with the broader conversation regarding our future that the Governing Board has begun exploring.

For the coming year, we should set aside some monies to hold a retreat, workshop, or a facilitated conversation with the congregation. Monies would include food as well as possible fees for a venue and speaker/facilitator.

*(508.11 \$750 shared with GB strategy activities)*

### 4. Stewardship

- a) The Stewardship team used the UCC's prepackaged campaign this year (\$50) to establish the theme and develop various aspects of our campaign. This was a major time-saver and enhancement. Additional materials were needed for note cards, etc.  
<https://www.ucc.org/stewardship-resources-materials/>

It is recommended that we budget monies for Stewardship at the same level as we did this year.

## H. Appendix

### 1. Worship technology proposal

Purchase new wireless audio mixer (we are using a borrowed wired mixer) and microphones. The "enhancement" shown below would be a tablet device to control the mixer as opposed to having volunteers use their personal devices. Rick LaMarre did the research and estimates.

- 1) \$700 essential items (mixer and microphones)
- 2) \$250 replacement of miscellaneous worn out or unreliable items
- 3) \$700 enhancement (tablet) - could be less depending on model chosen

### 2. Music Director budget input

Music Director request **for yearly budgetary amount \$1200 per year not including accompanist**

RATIONALE:

#### CHORAL LIBRARY

1. To enable us to enhance our choral library with appropriate musical selections that address the needs of the choir.

There is a dearth of SAB arrangements and we have an SAB choir.

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Recommended: A purchase of 10 of each octavo anthem and 2 additional copies for choir director and organist.

These octavos would be purchased as needed at the discretion of the director in order to provide adequate music for the choir.

### **COMPENSATE ARTISTS OUTSIDE OF CHURCH COMMUNITY WHO PERFORM SPECIAL MUSIC DURING WORSHIP**

2. To adequately compensate artists of dance and instrumental abilities outside of our church community who perform special music during worship services.

### **CONFERENCES/WORKSHOPS**

3. For Music Director to attend church music workshops and/or church music conferences as they come up and are deemed important by minister and/or music director

### **BEGIN SAVING FOR NEW CHOIR ROBES**

4. To begin purchase of lightweight choir robes/ stoles. We could purchase one/ two lightweight robes per year and complete the inventory in several years.

### **BEGIN ESTABLISHING A RECORDER ENSEMBLE (4-5 recorders)**

5. To begin purchasing a set of recorders with the purpose of establishing a recorder ensemble of 4-5 individuals within the congregation to play during worship services. Recorders are easy to play and people of all ages respond very well to learning the recorder.

I think there is a separate line item for substitute organists/keyboardists on those weeks the church organist is off on vacation/other, but if there is not, please add to this total.

### **Substitute Accompanist**

Regarding the accompanist, other musical choices could be made such as an a cappella service, a folk service, etc...

That is if there will be a group of Sundays that Leilani will not be here.

So looking forward, I would budget on 5 at \$150 each. \$750. It could be reduced to \$600 (If they are a separate line item the case could be made to budget \$600 + for this to cover 4 services and I could find other music to fill in the gaps when we go over 4. )

Submitted October 25, 2023